

July 13, 2015

To the Sentencing Judge:

I am writing to plead for your leniency when sentencing Muneeb and Sohaib Akhter, who are my nephews.

I am a 32-year-old alumni of George Mason University currently residing in Illinois. I graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Health Systems Management in 2004 and have worked most recently for the Adventist Health System as Team Lead of the Radiation Oncology Department. I grew up in Virginia and have known Muneeb and Sohaib since they were born. Immediately, my sister and I had a connection with them and spent every minute we could with them when they were babies. My sister and I are identical twins as well, so it was amazing to be able to share our experiences with Muneeb and Sohaib growing up. I have watched these boys grow into incredibly smart, responsible, and respectable young men who care a great deal about their friends, family, and community.

In 2004, they both walked me down the aisle at my wedding. Since then, I have had three children, my eldest being born with Down Syndrome in 2005. This year, when we were dealing with our daughter's school district segregating her in school and not allowing her to be included with her general education typical peers, Muneeb and Sohaib assisted with signing and sharing our petition to get others to fight the injustice. With their help, we were able to get the school district to overturn their original decision to keep our daughter segregated, and she will now be fully included in her home school this August.

Most recently, I was in Virginia attending a conference and found myself an hour away from my hotel on a Saturday night. My friend suggested I call Uber to get a ride, but I did not feel comfortable doing this. Muneeb and Sohaib didn't hesitate at all and came to my friend's house, picked me up, and drove me to my hotel. This is just one small example among many of how they go out of their way to help others.

I am aware of the events regarding Muneeb and Sohaib's guilty plea and I can assure you that these recent circumstances are not indicative of the kind of people they are. They made a terrible mistake, for which they are tremendously remorseful, and I can only hope that will weigh heavily on your mind when you make your final decision.

Muneeb and Sohaib are the eldest children in their family and are responsible for taking care of their grandmother, mother, and two younger sisters. I ask that you please use your best judgment,

but make it possible that Muneeb and Sohaib are able to return to their family as soon as possible.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Saadia Qureshi